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LETTER DATED 5 FEBRUARY 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF TAJIKISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a summary of the statement made by the President of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan, His Excellency Mr. E. Rakhmonov, at the meeting of Heads of State and Government of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Minsk.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Lakim K. KAYUMOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Tajikistan to the United Nations

Annex

Summary of the statement made by the President of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan, His Excellency Mr. E. Rakhmonov, at the meeting of Heads of State and Government of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Minsk

The tragic and destructive consequences of the protracted civil conflict in Tajikistan have caused unprecedented human suffering and extensive economic and material damage.

The fratricidal war has claimed more than 20,000 lives and destroyed the lives of many others. The Tajiks have become refugees in their own land. There are more than 540,000 officially registered refugees, of whom 120,000 are in Dushanbe alone.

The war has caused irreparable damage to the national economy. All of the country's economic development plans have remained virtually unimplemented. The national income derived from production has declined by 31 per cent in comparable prices.

The country's agricultural complex, transport system, housing stock and social sphere have been severely damaged.

Instability has had an adverse effect on our internal development. Democracy and development are interrelated; however, although democracy is a factor of development, development itself is an indispensable condition for genuine democracy.

The new constitutional Government of the Republic of Tajikistan is undertaking vigorous efforts and emergency measures to bring about the speedy stabilization of the situation in the political, economic, social, humanitarian and legal fields.

With a view to preventing further bloodshed, achieving peace and national reconciliation, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan adopted the General Amnesty Act, which exempts persons who committed illegal acts during the period from 27 May to 25 November 1992 from criminal, disciplinary and administrative liability.

The next step in this direction was the adoption by the Supreme Council of Tajikistan of the Decree on the Confiscation of Arms from the Population and the Disarming of Illegal Armed Formations. So far, approximately 2,500 weapons and a large quantity of military equipment and ammunition have already been confiscated. Government forces have gained control of almost the entire territory of the Republic and are taking measures to suppress isolated attacks by illegal armed groups that refuse to comply with the aforementioned Decree, evade the order to turn in their weapons and reject the peace proposals put forward by the Republic's leaders.

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A particularly important measure was the adoption of the Refugee Act, under which all refugees and their families who have registered with the proper authorities, receive certain privileges that include, first of all, assistance to the most vulnerable sectors of the population. According to preliminary estimates, the cost of providing humanitarian assistance to refugees is about 10 billion roubles.

Owing to the unstable socio-political and economic situation caused by the war, migration has increased, and people have begun to leave the Republic. In 1992, over a period of only nine months, 70,000 people, including 44,000 able-bodied people, left Tajikistan. It is estimated that more than 3 billion roubles will be needed just to train personnel to replace those who emigrated.

Faced with an economic crisis and a fratricidal war that have had a calamitous effect on the country, we understand that it is incredibly difficult for the Republic to cope with its problems alone. In this connection, I should like to express my sincere gratitude and thanks to the peoples and Governments of the countries members of the Commonwealth of Independent States for their selfless fraternal assistance, and especially Mr. Boris Nikolaevich Yeltsin, Mr. Islam Abduganyevich Karimov, Mr. Nursultan Abishevich Nazarbaev and the Heads of State and Government and the peoples of Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Armenia, Ukraine and Belarus.

The Tajiks will never forget the kindness and noble-mindedness of those who, in spite of their own difficulties and problems, held out a helping hand. When, as the result of a blockade, the populations of such large oblasts as Kulyab and Kurgan-Tyube were faced with starvation and epidemics, the assistance provided by these States made it possible to alleviate the plight of people not only in these oblasts but also in many other districts of our country that were experiencing acute shortages of food, medicine, fuel and so on.

The Parliament and Government of Tajikistan are taking all necessary measures to ensure the country's rapid return to normal. At present, transport and vital lines of communication have been practically restored. Constitutional organs are being reinstated in southern Tajikistan: law-enforcement agencies, courts and the office of the public prosecutor are being re-established. Everything is being done to ensure a peaceful and tranquil life for the population.

Our national policy can be productive only if there is a favourable external climate.

The Republic of Tajikistan is a subject of international law and a Member of the United Nations. It participates in the work of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and a number of other influential international and intergovernmental organizations, and has acceded to many conventions and treaties.

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In its foreign policy, the Republic of Tajikistan is guided by the fundamental principles of respect for the sovereignty, national independence and territorial integrity of other States, the rejection of confrontation and the settlement of disputes and conflict by exclusively peaceful, political means, and mutually advantageous cooperation on the basis of equality with all interested countries.

Bearing in mind its geographical and geopolitical position and the traditional historic ties among the peoples of the Central Asian region, Tajikistan will broaden and strengthen its friendly and good-neighbourly relations with its closest neighbours - Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan - and also with other States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the former republics of the USSR, with which it has established solid inter-State relations in recent years.

I must underscore that, recognizing the Charter of the United Nations and scrupulously observing the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act, the Paris Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international documents, Tajikistan will adhere to the universally recognized norms of inter-State relations, and will base its foreign and domestic policy on such norms, defend the primacy of law and vigorously suppress any attempts to violate human rights and democratic freedoms. Our Government will be able to guarantee the equality of all its citizens, their rights and fundamental freedoms, irrespective of national, racial, religious or other affiliation. The observance of human rights can stimulate creativity, innovation and initiatives, thereby making all human rights - civil, political, economic, social and cultural - not only a moral imperative but an important factor in the country's development.

I have stated many times and I repeat before you now that we are seeking to build a democratic secular State based on the rule of law. In particular, I should like to emphasize that, after the new legitimate leadership came to power in the country, not a single political party or a single opposition newspaper was banned, although there were more than ample legal grounds for doing so. We are for the establishment of a pluralistic democracy based on legality, and we advocate an open, constructive and businesslike dialogue with all parties and social organizations whose policies are based on the interests of the nation and all peoples and concern for the country's future. We are in favour of a civilized path of development for Tajikistan. The human person must be the cornerstone of our development process: only a free and active person can help develop our country. We oppose those who, while paying lip service to such high ideals as democracy and respect for human rights, do not propose anything constructive or practical to ensure the rapid stabilization of the situation in the country.

We are fully aware that the future of our country presupposes the active participation of the entire population of Tajikistan in public affairs. We can achieve this only by establishing democracy, ensuring respect for human rights and guaranteeing transparency in the conduct of State affairs.

Yes, we recognize that, in spite of the measures that we have taken so far, not everything in our country is going smoothly, the situation is not entirely calm: shots ring out from time to time and human blood is spilled. Some leaders of the opposition forces who unleashed the fratricidal war in order to seize power and who have now fled abroad, make various statements about the communists coming to power, the persecution and murder of people for political reasons or because of their devotion to Islam. All this has nothing to do with reality. Tajikistan is a multinational State, and representatives of diverse nations and ethnic groups have lived and are living here in a spirit of harmony and tolerance, and will continue to do so. The representatives of all denominations may freely profess their faith and perform their religious rites and rituals.

The overwhelming majority of the country's population is Muslim. We ourselves, as sons of this land and Muslims, honour our faith, national values and traditions. We have never fought against Islam or other political tendencies but only against Islamic fundamentalist fanatics and extremists who attempted to use violent and anti-democratic methods to seize power and establish a new totalitarian fundamentalist regime in Tajikistan.
